



“Next Year in Jerusalem”

From the perspective of the Jewish-Christian Reconciliation, certainly Passover is the most important and the most meaningful feast on the liturgical calendar. For the Jews it is a time of great joy for it not only celebrates national freedom, the liberation from slavery, and the new birth of a nation, it also reminds of God’s special intervention who “passed over” the Israelite houses marked with a sign of the blood of a lamb. For the Christians, to this remembrance of the lessons of the Exodus is added the remembrance of the Messiah who was identified with the lamb of redemption and through whom they experience new birth and deliverance from the slavery of evil. For both Jews and Christians this moment which takes place during the spring season carries the same message of deliverance and the same hope of resurrection. Even the food, the drink, and all the symbols associated with the rituals of the feasts are common. The egg, symbol of resurrection; the unleavened bread, symbol

of the broken body of the Messiah; the fruit of the vine, symbol of the redeeming blood; and the evocation of the lamb are present in both ceremonies. All this speaks of the same intense emotion of longing for a new life in the new City. Christians do those rituals as a sign of their hope “until He comes” (1 Corinthians 11:26) and the Jews sing the haggada and accompany the last taste of the afikomen, the hidden piece of the broken matzah, with a proclamation of their great hope: they greet each other with *ba-shana habaah birushalayim*, “next year in Jerusalem.”



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